

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

March 26, 1998

Business Meeting

**MINUTES**

The Board of Education and the Board of Vocational Education met for the regular business meeting in Conference Rooms D & E of the James Monroe State Office Building, Richmond, Virginia on Thursday, March 26, 1998 with the following members present.

Mr. Kirk T. Schroder, President  
Senator J. Brandon Bell, Vice President  
Mrs. Jennifer C. Byler  
Mr. Mark C. Christie  
Mrs. Kay Coles James

Mr. Robert H. Patterson Jr.  
Senator John W. Russell  
Mrs. Lil Tuttle  
rs. Cheri P. Yecke

Mr. Schroder, president, presided and called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

***INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE***

Senator Russell gave the invocation and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

***APPROVAL OF MINUTES***

Mrs. Byler made a motion for approval of the minutes of the February 26 meeting. Copies of the minutes had been distributed previously to all members of the Board for review. The motion was seconded by Mrs. James and carried unanimously.

***APPROVAL OF AGENDA***

Mr. Schroder moved *Item E, First Review of a Proposal to Promulgate Regulations Governing Substitute Teachers*, to the consent agenda. *Item K, Update from the 1998 Legislative Session*, was removed from the agenda and will be presented later to the Board.

The motion was made by Senator Russell, seconded by Mr. Christie, and carried unanimously for approval of the agenda as amended.

***HIGHLIGHT ON STUDENTS***

The Charlottesville High School Chamber Orchestra, Charlottesville City Public Schools performed for the Board. Mrs. Laura Mulligan Thomas directed the orchestra.

A Visual Arts Reflection Program Exhibition, sponsored by The Virginia Congress of Parents and Teachers, was also on display.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Mrs. Byler made a motion to adopt the following items on the consent agenda. Mr. Christie seconded the motion and carried unanimously.

Final Review of Recommendations Concerning Applications for Literary Fund Loans  
Final Review of Recommendations Concerning Release of Literary Fund Loans for Placement on Waiting List  
Final Review of Financial Report on Literary Loan Fund  
First Review of a Proposal to Promulgate Regulations Governing Substitute Teachers

#### **Final Review of Recommendations Concerning Applications for Literary Fund Loans**

The Department of Education's recommendation for approval of two new applications in the amount of \$6,250,000 and one emergency request in the amount of \$250,000 subject to final approval by the office of the Attorney General, was accepted by the Board of Education's vote on the consent agenda.

COUNTY, CITY, TOWN	SCHOOL	AMOUNT
Russell County	Russell County Vocational Ctr.	\$250,000.00
Roanoke City	Huff Lane Elementary	1,250,000.00
Stafford County	Stafford High	5,000,000.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$6,500,000.00</b>

#### **Final Review of Recommendations Concerning Release of Literary Fund Loans for Placement on Waiting List**

The Department of Education's recommendation is that funds be released for six projects in the amount of \$18,700,000. Russell County submitted an emergency application

in the amount of \$250,000 to repair a leaking roof on the Russell County Vocational Center. It is recommended that this project be given priority and that it be funded this month. It is also recommended that funding for three projects in the amount of \$11,250,000 be deferred and the projects be placed on the First Priority Waiting List. All recommendations were accepted by the Board of Education's vote on the consent agenda.

COUNTY, CITY, TOWN	SCHOOL	AMOUNT
Russell County	Russell Co. Vocational Center	250,000.00
Poquoson City	Poquoson Primary	450,000.00
Chesapeake City	Norfolk Highlands Primary	5,000,000.00
Manassas Park City	Manassas Park City High	5,000,000.00
Chesapeake City	Deep Creek High	3,000,000.00
Poquoson City	Poquoson High School	5,000,000.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$18,700,000.00</b>

**First Priority Waiting List**

COUNTY, CITY, TOWN	SCHOOL	AMOUNT
Spotsylvania County	New River Middle (Middle School #6)	5,000,000.00
Roanoke City	Huff Lane Elementary	1,250,000.00
Stafford County	Stafford High	5,000,000.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$11,250,000.00</b>

**Final Review of Financial Report on Literary Loan Fund**

The Department of Education's recommendation for approval of the financial report on the status of the Literary Fund as of January 30, 1998, was accepted by the Board of Education's vote on the consent agenda.

**First Review of a Proposal to Promulgate Regulations Governing Substitute Teachers**

The Department of Education's recommendation to waive first review and authorize the Department of Education to begin the regulatory procedures as specified in Virginia's Administrative Process Act (APA) by submitting necessary Pre-NOIRA (Pre-Notice of

Intended Regulatory Action) documents to the Office of the Secretary of Education and the Department of Planning and Budget, was accepted by the Board of Education's vote on the consent agenda.

### ***DISCUSSION OF CURRENT ISSUES***

None of the Board members had comments.

### ***PUBLIC COMMENT***

The following persons spoke during the public comment period.

Sylvia Wadsworth  
Gail Clark  
Nancy Shelton  
Quinton Wilhelmi

Bruce Sofinski  
Ron Lanier  
Lois Cumashot  
Phyllis Cook

### ***ACTION ITEMS***

#### ***Final Review of the New Proposal for the Commonwealth Governor=s School***

Dr. Jo Lynne DeMary and Dr. Janie Craig presented the following recommendations for the Commonwealth Governor=s School:

Based on the definition of a Virginia academic year governor=s school and the review of the proposal and the addendum to the proposal, the Department of Education is pleased to recommend approval of the Commonwealth Governor=s School as a half-day program with the following conditions.

1. Funding does not negatively impact the funding of the existing Governor=s Schools.
2. The program will open with no more than two regional sites. Expansion would require Board of Education approval.
3. Documentation that both sites are fully equipped with all necessary technology (including telecommunication and videoconferencing technologies) shall be presented to the State Board of Education no later than July 1, 1998.
4. The State Board of Education will receive written progress reports on May 1 and June 1 and a final report verifying that all of

the conditions have been met no later than July 1, 1998.

Mr. Christie made a motion to approve the Commonwealth Governor's School with staff recommendations. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Yecke and carried unanimously.

**First Review of Requests for Increased Graduation Requirements from Local School Divisions**

Mr. Charles Finley said that additional requests to increase graduation requirements beyond those prescribed in the *Standards of Accreditation* have been received from Essex County, Frederick County, Washington County, Wise County, Winchester City, Spotsylvania County, and Manassas City.

Mr. Christie made a motion to approve the request from Winchester City Public Schools and Halifax County Public Schools to add one additional history credit coming out of the electives so there is no net increase in the Standard Diploma credits. Mrs. Byler amended the motion so that transfer students shall not be denied a diploma if they meet the statewide requirements. The motion was seconded by Senator Russell. The motion passed with a vote of eight to one.

Mrs. Tuttle made the following comments: I can't in good faith support local school divisions' requests to change the graduation standards at this time. This has nothing at all to do with any specific school division or specific requests. It has everything to do with principle. This Board set new graduation standards after conducting a thorough year-long, well publicized public discussion. It seems patently wrong to me to allow school divisions to change those standards without the same level of public debate. The Board set explicit graduation standards because the public questioned the validity of the high school diploma. No one knew exactly what a diploma meant any more. It seems patently wrong to me to extensively publicize uniform state graduation requirements, only to quietly at a single board meeting undermine those uniform requirements by allowing local variations. The Board set uniform graduation requirements to ensure fairness and equitable treatment of students...that all students received the exact same diploma for the exact same level of achievement regardless of whether they lived in Bristol or Fairfax or Virginia Beach or Winchester. It seems patently wrong to me to create a system which invites unequitable treatment of students depending upon their place of residence. The Board set tough, higher graduation standards for kids...these requirements aren't weak, and they certainly aren't minimum standards anymore. They will be difficult for some of our students to meet. It seems patently wrong to me to allow local school divisions to add on more graduation requirements before we even know if students can meet the ones that have been put into place. At the very least, we ought to see how kids and schools perform on the SOL tests before we entertain the idea of raising the bar yet again. So I will vote *no* on all of these requests because, at this point in time, it is the only vote I can cast in good conscience.

Mr. Christie made a motion to continue all the other requests until next month until

written guidelines are developed. The motion was seconded by Mrs. James and carried unanimously.

Mr. Schroder requested Mr. Christie and Mrs. Yecke to develop a written policy to present to board members at the next meeting.

The board decided to hold the other requests for second review until a written policy is developed.

### **Second Review of Requests for Waivers of Pre-Labor Day Opening Requirements**

Mr. Schroder abstained from this issue because his law firm has provided legal counsel to the Virginia Hospitality and Travel Association. Mr. Christie and Mr. Patterson also abstained for similar reasons. Senator Bell presided on this issue.

Requests for a waiver of pre-Labor Day opening has been received from Fairfax County, Manassas Park City, Northumberland County, Prince Edward County, Prince William County, Westmoreland County, and West Point.

Mr. Finley indicated that Fairfax County withdrew their request for to open prior to labor day. Instead they requested to be allowed to open one elementary school for a year-round program.

Senator Russell made a motion to approve Fairfax County request to open a year-round program and continue the year-round program in Danville. Mrs. Yecke amended the motion to approve the Fairfax request pending their approval as an experimental and innovative program. The motion was seconded by Mrs. James and all carried.

The board decided to delay request from local school divisions for waivers of Labor Day opening pending finalization of the legislation.

Mrs. Tuttle requested that guidelines be established so that responses to future requests for waivers of Pre-Labor Day opening are uniform.

### **American Sign Language Instruction at the Secondary Level**

The Department of Education's recommendation is to approve the AFramework for Instruction in American Sign Language in Virginia's Public Schools® and the ARecommendation for American Sign Language Teacher Qualifications.®

Senator Russell made a motion that parents are notified of the effects of the students taking American Sign Language as a foreign language at the time student schedules are prepared. He amended motion to add to the proposal that local school divisions have the

responsibility to give parents notification of possible ramifications with entry into college. The motion was seconded by Mrs. James and carried unanimously.

## ***DISCUSSION ITEMS***

### ***Report of the 1998 Outcome Accountability Report***

The Board of Education accepted the Report of the 1998 Outcome Accountability Project.

### ***Information Update on the Early Intervention Reading Initiative***

The Board of Education received the report on Information Update on the Early Intervention Reading Initiative as presented by Dr. James Heywood.

### ***Update from the 1998 Legislative Session***

Information will be sent to board members at a later date.

## ***ADJOURNMENT***

There being no further business, Mr. Schroder adjourned the meeting of the Virginia Board of Education and the Board of Vocational Education at 11:30 a.m.

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President